

From: [Matt Kales](#)
To: [Jeff Berglund](#); [Pat Deibert](#)
Cc: [Jodi Bush](#); [Michael Thabault](#)
Subject: RE: Sagebrush Focus Area (for now)
Date: Tuesday, January 06, 2015 1:31:23 PM

Thanks, all. This came up briefly on the call Noreen took with Ed and Stephanie late yesterday (FS was on, too). To Jeff and Pat's point, I think we can support minor technical changes that address artifacts from the GIS/mapping process but if BLM is asking us to support wholesale changes to the original geography we identified I think we need to have a conversation with Noreen and explain and discuss the conservation implications of doing so. From what we heard yesterday, it sounds like BLM is making a case for "consolidating" their lands in the proposed MT stronghold area on the grounds that would result in more conservation impact. I didn't fully grasp their rationale either, so perhaps a good next step would be to ask the MT/regional planners for a more detailed explanation of why they are proposing these changes. MK

From: Berglund, Jeff [mailto:jeff_berglund@fws.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, January 06, 2015 1:22 PM
To: Deibert, Pat
Cc: Jodi Bush; Matt Kales; Michael Thabault
Subject: Re: Sagebrush Focus Area (for now)

Hi Pat. I haven't seen this revised map, although I was aware that BLM was looking at the original stronghold map and would at some point be proposing revisions - either just internally or possibly to us. We weren't really allowed to engage on this with them in any detail, but in a general sense, it sounded like BLM was contemplating correcting mapping errors (limiting to PHMA with respect to BLM lands) and potentially proposing to remove some fragmented PHMA south of the Missouri and include more PHMA north of the river that had been initially omitted. I don't know what selection criteria they applied - but it appears they may have removed areas south of the river and north of the river (I'm not seeing where anything was added).

It's difficult to comment on this without knowing how these areas were delineated initially, the criteria / rationale applied in this potential revision, nor what the rules are in terms of potential revision (is it "allowed"?). Is BLM looking for specific comments from us at this point?
Thanks,

Jeff

On Tue, Jan 6, 2015 at 12:19 PM, Deibert, Pat <pat_deibert@fws.gov> wrote:
Hi Jeff and Jodi -

I got this from the acting BLM coordinator for the RM area. He was told that local BLM was working this through with all of you but wasn't certain John was able to get to it before he left.

A little background - BLM was very concerned that our original stronghold maps contained areas of non-habitat and non-federal ownership, and extended outside of PACs. Most of that were GIS errors - or rather differences in base data - and BLM asked us to correct the base maps. That didn't happen for a variety of reasons so BLM has taken the initiative to do so (which is fine). But it sounds like they are taking it a step further based on the following e-

mail trail.

The strongholds are limited to Federal ownership (not just BLM) and beyond errors in GIS analyses we really cannot change them.

Please let me know if you are involved in this effort and any summary of where it stands. My apologies - again - for the additional ask.

pat

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From: **Magaletti, Matthew** <mmagalet@blm.gov>

Date: Tue, Jan 6, 2015 at 11:03 AM

Subject: Fwd: Sagebrush Focus Area (for now)

To: Pat Deibert <pat_deibert@fws.gov>

Here ya go!

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Carman, Stephanie** <scarman@blm.gov>

Date: Tue, Dec 30, 2014 at 10:37 AM

Subject: Fwd: Sagebrush Focus Area (for now)

To: Edwin Roberson <eroberso@blm.gov>, Stephen Small <ssmall@blm.gov>, Joseph Stout <j2stout@blm.gov>, Vicki Herren <vherren@blm.gov>, Michael Hildner <mhildner@blm.gov>, Matthew Magaletti <mmagalet@blm.gov>

Proposed Sagebrush Focus Area boundary changes in MT.

Stephanie Carman

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From: **Carlson, John** <jccarlso@blm.gov>

Date: Tue, Dec 30, 2014 at 12:10 PM

Subject: Sagebrush Focus Area (for now)

To: "Brooks, Sandra S" <ssleach@blm.gov>, Jamie Connell <jconnell@blm.gov>, Stephanie Carman <scarman@blm.gov>

Cc: Ruth Miller <ramiller@blm.gov>, Jake Chaffin <jlchaffi@blm.gov>, Randall Schardt <rschardt@blm.gov>

Hello all,

Attached is a map for the BLM proposed Sagebrush Focus Area in MT.

This map was built using the FWS provided data layer from their mapping exercise with

modifications based on BLM land parcel continuity, size and location to achieve an area that can better provide sage-grouse conservation certainty on BLM lands at a scale that matters to GRSG.

The parcels removed from the data provided as a starting point by the USFWS were generally peripheral, small and isolated parcels where changes in BLM management actions would not necessarily provide conservation gains to sage-grouse due to current and ongoing changes to habitat on the interstitial lands (in particular the areas south of the Missouri River have high levels of current impairment from agricultural conversion and human disturbance (J. Smith pers. comm)). All are within PHMA already identified.

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